

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMCONSUL KRAKOW POUCH

AMCONSUL POZNAN POUCH

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT SHUM PL

SUBJ: PROMINENT POLISH PARTY MODERATE COMMENTS ON CHURCH-STATE
RELATIONS

1. THE MARCH 25 ISSUE OF POLUMYKA, THE MAIN POLISH POLITICAL WEEKLY, INCLUDES A LENGTHY LEADING ARTICLE ON CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS BY EDITOR-IN-CHIEF AND PZPR CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBER MIECZYSLAW RAKOWSKI. THE ARTICLE IS THE FIRST EXTENDED COMMENTARY OF THE SUBJECT TO APPEAR IN THE OFFICIAL OR SEMI-OFFICIAL MEDIA SINCE PZPR FIRST SECRETARY GIEREK'S MEETINGS WITH CARDINAL WYSZYNSKI AND POPE PAUL VI LAST FALL. THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME OF THE MAIN POINTS OF RAKOWSKI'S ARTICLE WHICH WILL BE TREATED IN MORE DETAIL IN A FORTHCOMING AIRGRAM:

(A) THE ATTITUDE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH TOWARDS "SOCIAL-
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ISM" IN EASTERN EUROPE HAS CHANGED SIGNIFICANTLY. THE VATICAN NOW RECOGNIZES "SOCIALISM" AS A PERMANENT FACT OF LIFE AND DEALS WITH IT ON THAT BASIS. CARDINAL WYSZYNSKI'S JANUARY 6 SERMON, "AN INTERESTING AND IMPORTANT POLITICAL DOCUMENT", TESTIFIES TO THE "POSITIVE EVOLUTION OF THE ATTITUDE OF THE CHURCH TOWARDS CHANGES WHICH WERE MADE IN THE LAST DECADES AND TOWARDS SOCIALIST AUTHORITY IN POLAND."

(B) THE CORNERSTONE OF GIEREK'S POLICY OVER THE PAST SEVEN YEARS HAS BEEN "THE UNIFICATION OF POLES AROUND POSITIVE GOALS." RECONCILIATION WITH THE CHURCH IS PART OF THIS PLAN. IT IS A MOVE OF STRATEGIC, NOT MERELY TACTICAL, SIGNIFICANCE.

(C) THE STATE, NOW MORE THAN EVER, IS READY TO COOPERATE WITH THE CHURCH "IN ALL AREAS OF PUBLIC LIFE" BECAUSE MARXISM HAS SO THOROUGHLY TAKEN ROOT IN POLAND.

(D) SOME CHURCH REQUESTS TO ALLOW IMPROVEMENT OF FACILITIES TO MEET SPIRITUAL NEEDS ARE UNDERSTANDABLE, BUT THOSE WHICH CROSS THE BOUNDARY WHICH SEPARATES CHURCH AND STATE ARE UNACCEPTABLE. IN RAKOWSKI'S "PERSONAL OPINION", "REALIZATION OF MANY OF THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS DEPENDENT, OF COURSE, ON ITS RELATION AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE AIMS AND WORKS USEFUL FOR THE ENTIRE NATION WHICH THE PARTY AND STATE AUTHORITIES DIRECT."

(E) THE CHURCH CANNOT COMPLAIN ABOUT LACK OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN POLAND; FOREIGN STATESMEN, AS WELL AS FOREIGN COMMENTATORS UNSYMPATHETIC TO POLAND'S POLITICAL SYSTEM, HAVE ACKNOWLEDGED THE EXISTENCE OF TOLERANCE IN THE COUNTRY.

(F) THE "SOCIALIST" SYSTEM IN FACT GIVES THE CATHOLIC CHURCH MORE OPPORTUNITY TO REALIZE ITS MORAL PRINCIPLES IN SOCIETY BECAUSE IT HAS REMOVED THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL REASONS WHICH COMPEL INDIVIDUALS TO VIOLATE THOSE PRINCIPLES AND, BY ELIMINATING THE SOCIAL CLASSES WITH WHICH THE CHURCH WAS LONG IDENTIFIED, HAS MADE POSSIBLE DIRECT CONTACT BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND THE COMMON MAN.

(G) MARXISTS AND CATHOLICS HAVE DIFFERENT ATTITUDES TOWARDS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE COLLECTIVE THAT ARE DIFFICULT TO RECONCILE. THE CHURCH, IN PREACHING FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE, FREEDOM OF CHOICE, CANNOT AT THE SAME TIME EXPECT THOSE WHO HOLD DIFFERENT WORLD VIEWS, SUCH AS MARXISTS, TO SUBMERGE THEIR IDEOLOGICAL VIEWS TO CURRY FAVOR WITH IT. THE CONFRONTATION BETWEEN MARXISTS AND CATHOLICS IN "THE AREA OF VALUES...CAN AND SHOULD BE INTERESTING AND CREATIVE. UNDER ONE CONDITION: THAT THE POSITIONS OF NEITHER SIDE BE DEFORMED OR SIMPLIFIED, THAT MYTHS OF VARIOUS KINDS LIKE THAT OF THE VULGAR "MATERIALISM" OF SOCIALISTS NOT BE REHASHED."

(H) MARXISTS HAVE LONG SINCE DISCARDED "PRIMITIVE ATHEISM" AND THE CHURCH SHOULD NO LONGER DISTORT MARXIST DOCTRINE IN THIS RESPECT. MARXISTS OF COURSE TREASURE THE INDIVIDUAL, BUT BELIEVE THAT THE MATERIAL BASIS OF HIS WELFARE MUST BE ASSURED BEFORE HE CAN FULLY REALIZE HIS POTENTIAL. THIS GOAL IS A FAR CRY FROM THE CRUDE IMAGE OF "TECHNOLOGICAL MAN" SOMETIMES DEPICTED FROM THE PALPIT AS THE GOAL OF "SOCIALISM."

2. COMMENT: RAKOWSKI, AS A CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBER AND EDITOR OF WHAT OFTEN IS POLAND'S MOST INTERESTING SANCTIONED PUBLICATION, IS AN IMPORTANT PARTY MODERATE WHO HAS STUCK HIS NECK OUT ON OTHER ISSUES. A WELL-INFORMED WESTERN CORRESPONDENT TOLD US RAKOWSKI HAD TO STRUGGLE TO GET THIS ARTICLE INTO PRINT. APART

FROM HIS QUALIFIED PRAISE FOR WYSZYNSKI'S SERMON, IT IS NOT EASY TO SEE WHY ANY BUT THE MOST INTRACTABLE IDEOLOGICAL DINOSAURS IN THE PARTY WOULD HAVE OBJECTED TO ITS CONTENTS. RAKOWSKI CLAIMS THE STATE INITIATED THE RAPPROCHMENT WITH THE CHURCH FROM A POSITION OF STRENGTH AS PART OF A LARGER PLAN TO UNIFY THE NATION. HE PROMISES CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN APOLITICAL DESIRES OF THE CHURCH AS LONG AS IT BEHAVES. RAKOWSKI SPEAKS OF THE "STATE AND CHURCH REACHING OUT THEIR HANDS TO EACH OTHER," BUT HE OBVIOUSLY EXPECTS THE CHURCH TO REACH A LITTLE FURTHER. END COMMENT. SCHAUFEELE

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